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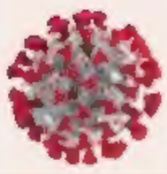

VAX DATA SENSITIVE, DON'T SHARE IT: CENTRE TO STATES

In a strange order, the Union health ministry on Wednesday asked states not to share vaccine availability status on public forums

WE OWN ALL VACCINE DATA: HEALTH MINISTRY

States are supposed to update the Centre on stock and transactions of all vaccines. The health ministry claimed it owns all vaccine-related data and that it cannot be shared with any third party, including the media. The letter evoked sharp reactions on social media with people wondering how data on stock and storage of Covid vaccine doses could be sensitive

CURIOUS TIMING RAISES EYEBROWS

- The letter, written by Pradeep Haldar, Advisor, Reproductive and Child Health, did not specify why the information is deemed sensitive or how sharing it will undermine the jab programme
- Curiously, the directive comes amid rising criticism against the Centre for its inability to support states with ample doses | P9

eVIN
ELECTRONIC VACCINE INTELLIGENCE NETWORK TRACKS VAX STOCK STATUS

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2nd wave shock limited to Q1, recovery tied to vax, says FinMin

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ New Delhi

THE second Covid wave has somewhat dented the economy but its impact will be confined to the first quarter of this financial year, claimed the monthly economic report released by the Union finance ministry on Wednesday. However, this prognosis will hold true only if the vaccination drive becomes aggressive and all Budget announcements are implemented efficiently, the report added. In other words, if the inoculation programme drags, it will drastically impact future economic recovery.

"The onset of the second wave of Covid-19 since mid-February 2021 and localised or state-wide restrictions adopted to combat its spread, have posed a probable downside risk to the momentum in India's economic recovery in the first quarter of 2021-22," it noted. The report added that with state-level lockdown restrictions, manufacturing and construction activities could experience a softer economic shock in Q1.

"To avoid or lower the ferocity of subsequent waves, an accelerated vaccination drive is imperative. Vaccinating to achieve herd immunity (75-80% of population) will boost consumer and producer confidence and reinvigorate the engines of economic growth. For this purpose, challenges pertaining to vaccine supply, vaccine hesitancy, operational aspects to achieve high daily throughput, and widespread reach must be anticipated," it said.

The finance ministry has made a strong pitch to vaccinate 70 crore people with at least a single dose by September to boost confidence among people and regain the momentum of economic recovery.

"With around 120 days to 31st September 2021, around 93 lakh vaccinations are required per day to achieve the herd immunity. The peak daily vaccination rate attained till date is 42.65 lakh. This peak was achieved using one shift of 8-9 hours of vaccination. So, doubling the shifts and possibly vaccinating 24x7 for a couple of months – particularly in August and September when supply is expected to increase significantly – can enable the ambitious, but possible, throughput of 1 crore shots a day," the report recommended, adding that this is ambitious, but possible.

DISTRESSED SECTORS SEND SOS MESSAGES

Airport, hospitality firms say they can't survive without govt help

AIRPORT OPERATORS SEEK SUPPORT

- Drop in air traffic hit revenues
- Struggling to sustain operations and meet debt obligations
- Unable to raise funds due to poor cash flows and credit ratings

80-95 million
Expected domestic air passengers this year vis-a-vis 140 million in 2019

HOSPITALITY SECTOR WANTS STIMULUS

It has sought a sector-specific stimulus package that includes:

- Full waiver of interest on loans
- Extension on moratorium on the principal amount for all loans
- DBT of basic pay to employees

₹1.82 lakh crore
Hospitality sector's revenue in FY20. 75% got wiped off in FY21 | P12

Revenue dent may be lesser than last yr in State

ANUSHA RAVI @ Bengaluru

COMPARED to last year, revenues for Karnataka may be slightly better this fiscal year, despite the Covid second wave and partial lockdown. Revenue receipts from various sources this time have been better than last year during the same period, officials said, but uncertainty looms with the third wave around the corner.

Additional liabilities following heavy borrowings last fiscal year, pending GST dues as well as reduced allocation of funds from the Centre this year too have left Karnataka's finances in a precarious position. With Covid management taking priority, funds (sanctioned, allocated or saved) from various departments are being channelised for medicines, awareness, vaccines, infrastructure, financial aid etc to fight the pandemic. From big schemes to PD accounts of deputy commissioners and gram panchayat allowances, funds are being diverted to assist Covid management.

At a recent video-conference with gram panchayat members, Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa said that funds diverted to each gram panchayat account from the State Disaster Relief Fund should be utilised towards Covid management. While the State government is diverting funds from other departments, delays and allocation cuts by the Centre are making things difficult.

As per the Union Budget 2021-22, Karnataka's share in the Central pool of taxes by way of devolution is about Rs 24,000 crore. The Centre pays this in 14 monthly instalments. While Karnataka should have received around ₹1,700 crore per month, it has got only ₹1,429 crore in this fiscal year so far. Also, Karnataka has not received a single instalment of its GST compensation this financial year and is waiting for ₹11,000 crore in dues from the Centre. P3

Karnataka gets ₹135.92 crore from Centre

In its third instalment of revenue deficit grant from the Centre, Karnataka received ₹135.92 crore. The state has so far received ₹407.76 crore under the head. As per the 15th Finance Commission recommendation, the state is eligible for ₹1,600 crore.

CRUNCHING NUMBERS

- **₹1,850 crore** economic package to be additional expenditure above budget estimates
- Funds for package to come from savings and cuts from other departments, revised estimate if shortage arises
- Pending GST dues from Union Government: **₹11,000 crore**
- Karnataka's share in devolution: **₹24,000 crore (₹1,700 crore** approx. over 14 months)
- Devolution that Karnataka has been receiving: **₹1,429 crore** per month
- Grant-in-aids from GOI so far: **₹2,700 crore**
- Karnataka's share of revenue deficit grant: **₹1,600 crore**

A health worker vaccinates a woman in Bengaluru | ASHISHKRISHNA HP

KARNATAKA	JUNE 8	JUNE 9
Fresh cases	9,808	10,959
Recoveries	23,449	20,246
Deaths	179	192

JAB-O-METER
TAKE YOUR SHOT
June 8: **25,56,652 doses**
June 9: **31,31,759 doses**
TOTAL DOSES: 24,24,78,167

RAVAGED BY COVID, BUT K'TAKA FAILS TO BUMP UP VAX DRIVE

RANJANI MADHAVAN, IFFATH FATHIMA & AJITH MS
@ Bengaluru, Mysuru

WHILE the vaccination drive should have picked up pace with the surge in Covid cases and deaths, the State Government is not close to its targets as yet. None of the four segments categorised for vaccine coverage has reached 30 per cent of respective populations.

Starting with healthcare workers on January 16, of the estimated 16 lakh, only 4.77 lakh (4,77,210) have completed vaccinations (both doses), achieving only 29.82 per cent of the target with 11,22,790 remaining. This is the segment that has seen the highest coverage in the State with the remaining categories recording far lower percentages.

A mere 2,20,415 (just 1.10 per cent) of the two crore frontline workers across Karnataka have received both doses, leaving 1.97 crore (1,97,79,585) yet to complete the dosage; only 13.28 per cent (22,05,779) have been vaccinated among the 1.66 crore-strong segment of 45-plus age category, leaving 1.43 crore (1,43,94,230) yet to complete the vaccination. P4

THE NUMBERS SAY IT ALL...

Category	Target	Achieved (2 doses)	% achieved	Remaining
45 and above (includes 60 and above)	1.66 cr	22,05,770	13.28%	1.43 cr (1,43,94,230)
Frontline worker	2 cr	2,20,415	1.10%	1.97 cr (1,97,79,585)
Healthcare worker	16 lakh	4,77,210	29.82%	11 lakh (11,22,790)
18-44 years	3.26 cr	4,293	0.01%	3.25 cr (3,25,95,707)

COVAXIN WAIT TO RELEASE PHASE 3 TRIALS FINDINGS GETTING LONGER

Bharat Biotech on Wednesday said the final analysis of its efficacy trials between November and January will be made public only in July, after it is submitted to the drug regulator and peer reviewed journals with a timeline of about three months for publication | P10

CJI INITIATIVE

Telangana HC judge strength to jump by 75%

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ New Delhi

AIMING to reduce case pendency across the country, especially in high courts, Chief Justice of India N V Ramana is now pushing to increase their sanctioned strength of judges.

To begin with, he has given his final approval to raise the sanctioned strength of judges from 24 to 42 at the Telangana High Court — a jump of 75% — where 2,37,000 cases are pending as on date. This is one of the biggest booster shots in the higher judiciary in a very long time. Of the 42 judges, 32 will be permanent while the rest will be additional judges for now.

The proposal to increase the strength of the Telangana High Court had been pending with the Centre since 2019. After assuming office, CJI Ramana gave it fresh impetus by urging Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the ministry of law and justice to expedite it.

After receiving their green light, the CJI is learnt to have spoken to the HC Chief Justice and taken stock of the available infrastructure before giving his final approval. To fill up the vacancies, 28 will be elevated from the bar while 14 will be appointed from judicial services. A formal notification is expected soon.

In a recent meeting with chief justices of all high courts, the CJI had shared his vision of creating a National Judicial Infrastructure Corporation.

EXPRESS READ

IOA in search of new kit sponsor for Olympics

New Delhi: After dropping Chinese sportswear firm Li Ning as India's Olympic kit sponsor, Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju said India's athletes will not wear branded apparel at the event, even as the Indian Olympic Association said the search is on for a new partner.

NATIONWIDE	JUNE 8	JUNE 9
Fresh cases	86,498	92,596
Recoveries	1,82,282	1,62,664
Deaths	2,123	2,219

Power dearer by 3.8 pc in state, average hike of 30 paise/unit

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

A household in Bengaluru, falling under Bescom limits, that consumed around 220 units of electricity and paid a monthly bill of Rs 1,794, will have to pay an additional ₹39 (2.3 per cent increase) from next month. Reason: The Karnataka Electricity Regulatory Commission has revised the power tariff.

In a virtual meeting with all stakeholders on Wednesday, KERC Chairman Shambhu Dayal Meena announced an average increase of 30 paise per unit, which translates to an average increase of 3.84 per cent. The revised tariff comes into effect from April 1. The delay in announcement is because of the election code of conduct and the pandemic.
CONTINUED ON: P7

Cong erosion on as BJP snaps up Jitin Prasada

MANISH ANAND @ New Delhi

THE BJP set off alarm bells within the Congress on Wednesday by engineering the crossover of another young leader, former Union minister Jitin Prasada. With this, the party appears to have made its intentions clear of mopping up the remaining young talent within the Congress, a ploy that began with the induction of Jyotiraditya Scindia. A similar exercise in Rajasthan is a work in progress.

Jitin Prasada

Union Minister for Railways Piyush Goyal did the honours for inducting Prasada. Giving a perspective to the latest acquisition, BJP's media in-charge Anil Baluni recalled that Jitin's father Jitendra Prasada had once contested against Sonia Gandhi for the Congress' chief post, suggesting the door was open for leaders of substance who were otherwise rotting in opposition parties.

While Prasada lost a couple of Lok Sabha elections ever since the rise of the BJP in UP, he had served as a minister during the UPA tenure. He was a signatory to the letter by 23 Congress leaders who had demanded a full-time Congress president earlier.
CONTINUED ON: P10

REAL TO REEL

Now, Sindhuri story to hit the screen!

KARTHIK K K @ Mysuru

FROM 'Nikhil Ellidiyappa' to 'CD Lady' to the latest 'Bharatha Sindhuri', Sandalwood producers are in a constant race to capitalise on the controversy of the moment and gain publicity.

Whenever there is a newsbreak that grabs people's attention, the first thing Kannada film industry producers do is to apply for a catchy title with the Karnataka Films Chamber of Commerce. It is another matter that most of these titles never turn into films or hit the silver screen.

The latest addition to this craze is the title 'Bharatha Sindhuri', which claims to be a movie based on IAS officer **Rohini Sindhuri**, whose controversial tenure as a Mysuru deputy commissioner ended recently. Writer and director S Krishna Swarnasandra said that the movie will depict the exemplary work done by the officer. It was just last week that Sindhuri was transferred after her spat with Mysuru City Corporation Shilpa Nag became public.

In February 2019, during the thick of campaigning for the Mandya Lok Sabha seat, 'Nikhil Ellidyappa' became a catchphrase that caught people's attention. A producer, Ganesh, was successful in owning the title. It was during the same election that 'Jodettu', which means a pair of oxen referring to actors Darshan Thoogudeepa and Yash, that became the talk of the town. Another producer managed to get that too registered.

There have been several such instances where filmmakers have tried to grab publicity. When IPS officer Annamalai announced his retirement, it was the title 'Anna IPS' that was sought after. 'Kambala' and 'Fast Man' were in producers' list when Kambala Srinivas Gowda grabbed national headlines for becoming the fastest man on earth.